

#7
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Dear Kerry,

Certainly a pleasure to hear from you again. I had responded to your last letter, from the Quarter, by sending you a copy of the Pell poems recently appearing in SIGNET—hoping that you would understand it was only the extreme pressures of time keeping me from answering in detail, at once.

I must, first, admit to you that I am genuinely relieved that you have left New Orleans. But I must, too, hasten to add that it is not because I dislike the city—I still, at times, long for the people and surroundings of the Quarter myself—but rather because, frankly, I began to suspect you of becoming something of an intellectual sloth. I'm sure as hell not your keeper in any way, nor responsible for what you might do or think, but you do have a few guts, my friend; 'twould be a pity if you never got around to showing them.

Of course! And best of luck, Ragnar, with the edition of 100 poems. I'll want a copy, of course—of course; just let me know when, where and how much. What about publication of them individually? How has it gone?

Yes, Wyeth's paintings interest me also. They are (the ones I've seen) ordered, real—and yet are alive with movement...imagination. I couldn't help but smile vaguely to myself, however, at your mentioning that name—because of its resemblance to another—and recall these lines:

'...the hill of Wyatt Oil was a solid sheet of flame.'

"I'm leaving it as I found it. Take over. It's yours."

Ah...again you mention SONG OF THE WHITE ROSE. It remains, I'm sorry to say, unpublished...because of its length and, in some instances I presume, because of its lack of 'gravity' or some such equally muddy 'point of view.' Right. Not bleak enough for some; too long for others. Really, the only response I could regard as genuine came from Evelyn Thorne of EPOS (whose magazine I recommend to you), who liked it very much but could not give me the space. Also, Kerry, judging from the response of some others, I think I can say that the overall tone and direction of the poem make it just a wee bit too "bold" for many of our rather cautious contemporaries.

Anyway, I see no place for the poem that would do it justice, as of this hour. But I have given some thought to the nothing short of passionate interest you have had in it...from the very first, when I showed you the most preliminary drafts one night in the Bourbon House. Remember?

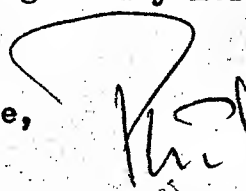
Yes. I have decided to sell it to you, outright, if you still desire it, and will agree to the usual terms. Should you be interested, its physical appearance would be: two copies; one handwritten, inscribed directly to you, dated and signed, and the other copy cut on an electric typewriter, also inscribed, dated & signed. Hard finish bond paper, of course, and sent first class mail along to you...flat, rather than folded in an envelope. The completed poem takes up sixty lines on the page, or two and a half pages (8 1/2" x 11") as typed. The handwritten copy would be, perhaps, twice that length. The price is fifty dollars (\$50).

The terms I mentioned have to do with reprint rights, ~~xx~~ and are as follows. I would agree not to allow it to be printed elsewhere without an acknowledgement (that is, any magazine would have to accept the poem as a 'reprint' and acknowledge your right of 'first possession,' as it were; and should the poem appear as part of a collection, i.e., in book form, your name would appear among the credits, just as a magazine's title or publisher's name normally does), but I would insist upon your supplying me with written permission to reprint the poem, with the type of acknowledgment I have just described, at the time of sale.

Think it over, and let me know. ROSE is not being considered by any editor at the moment, and I will hold it for a reasonable length of time, or until I hear from you one way or the other.

Your response to MOONLIGHT amuses me a little... I do not, of course, agree with you—but I suppose the Hemisphere is large enough for both (as well as large enough for me not to have to drag out that phoney remark of Voltaire's about promising to defend with my life your right to say it) without our resorting to any more than verbal warfare.

Write,



PS-- Robt. Beum's collection of poems is expected very soon. He knows of your interest, at least that shown in the past, because I recounted to him at length how it was I first came to read his work. Should you buy the book somewhere & want it signed, send it along to me & I'll take care of it for you. Or, should you want to buy it sight unseen / on strength of his past work that you have read, I'll let you know how much it is & buy one here, have him sign it for you, and send it along.

